

**CITY OF BOULDER
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: May 2, 2006

AGENDA TITLE: Consideration of a motion regarding a refined minor amendment process for the 2003 Transportation Master Plan (TMP)

PRESENTER/S: Tracy Winfree, Director of Public Works for Transportation
Mike Sweeney, Transportation Operations and Planning Coordinator
Randall Rutsch, Senior Transportation Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Transportation Master Plan TMP establishes the policy foundation for transportation investment and work programs for the city. The 2003 TMP was developed with the concept of creating a “living” plan that would be timely, accurate and responsive to changes in the real world. The TMP Web site, including the “Map It!” application and a supporting database, provides an easy way to make minor updates to the plan that are immediately accessible to the public via the Web on the E-Gov link from the city’s web page or by entering the following address:

www.ci.boulder.co.us/publicworks/depts/transportation/masterplaplan

If the plan on the Web site does not reflect recent construction or other activities by the city, it may create confusion and will certainly not provide the most up-to-date information to the community. The GIS-based plan allows for the TMP on the Web to accurately reflect what’s been built and what’s been approved through sanctioned city processes and plans. The example provided in **Attachment A** contrasts the facilities anticipated in the TMP and those being constructed under the development plan approved by the city. This proposal would allow city TMP mapping to reflect approved development plans and facilities as they are constructed.

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) proposed amendment process addresses what are considered to be “house keeping” or administrative amendments and minor facility changes to the TMP. TAB’s proposed amendment process identifies different amendment types and suggested associated reviews, as shown in **Attachment B**. This proposed amendment process was recommended by the TAB in a unanimous vote at its Sept. 12, 2005 meeting. *Both TAB and staff recommend that TMP policy changes continue to be considered only as part of the five-year major update to the TMP or as called up by City Council.*

By being able to make minor adjustments to the TMP outside of the five-year major update process, staff can keep the TMP, including the online mapping component and the

Web site, in agreement with existing conditions and real-world changes that occur in between the five-year major updates. It should also save staff time and financial resources during the major update process that used to be spent on reconciling the previously adopted plan with city approvals and construction activities that occurred since the last adoption.

Council is asked to approve this proposal so that staff can begin implementing the process to keep the TMP accurate and up-to-date.

Key Issue Identification: This material was presented to Council as a Weekly Information Packet Action Item on Sept. 22, 2005; however, the City Attorney determined that Council action was needed to adopt an amendment process for the TMP, and the city recently discontinued Action WIPs.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends Council adoption of the proposed TMP amendment process.

COUNCIL FILTER IMPACTS:

- Economic: Saved staff time and resources at the time of the next major TMP update.
- Environmental: None
- Social: A more user-friendly, up-to-date document for the public.

OTHER IMPACTS:

Keeping the TMP current should reduce confusion and staff time spent on reconciling the adopted plan with ongoing city approvals and construction activities. The proposed amendment process will be carried out by existing staff as part of its yearly work program.

BOARD AND COMMISSION FEEDBACK:

The Transportation Advisory Board has twice reviewed and unanimously recommended the proposed amendment process to City Council (Sept. 12, 2005 meeting). The attached materials outline the proposed process.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK:

There was no public comment on the proposed amendment process.

ANALYSIS:

The proposed amendment process is intended to keep the TMP up-to-date and accurate, encourage wider utilization of the Web-based resources and improve efficiency in the five-year major update of the TMP. The proposed process reflects a maturing of the TMP in that it would keep the plan updated and reflect changes in the existing conditions of Boulder's transportation system. With the system plans updated and current, the five-year plan review could focus more on a high-level assessment of progress, identifying

focus areas and needed policy changes.

BACKGROUND:

The TMP is the policy and long-range planning document for transportation in the city of Boulder. It describes the vision of a completed multimodal transportation system for the city, and contains the goals and objectives that guide transportation infrastructure investment and work programs. Elements of the plan include the planning level description of projects needed to complete the auto, transit, bicycle and pedestrian modal systems.

Transportation Project Development Process:

While the TMP envisions completed modal systems, describes the projects intended to produce that system and prioritizes Transportation investments, the city follows a number of additional steps to refine and approve any project prior to construction. These steps allow Council numerous opportunities for review and are shown in Attachment C and described below.

The first of these is inclusion of a proposed project in the city's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), the six-year investment program for the city. Following policy guidance from Council and budget estimates from the City Manager, project proposals are refined and included in the draft CIP prepared by mid year. The draft CIP is subject to a series of public hearings and decisions by Council leading up to approval of the CIP in the late fall of the year. As part of the CIP process, the annual budget is adopted by Council for the coming year.

It generally takes a number of years for a given project to advance through the annual CIP process and to finally be included in the adopted budget for the city. Following inclusion in the annual budget, a proposed project then goes through a more detailed planning and design process, called the Community Environmental Assessment Process (CEAP). The CEAP explores alternative project configurations and designs to fulfill the intent of the project while minimizing community and environmental impacts. A CEAP typically includes a public outreach and review process, and is the subject of a public hearing before one or more Boards. Board recommendations are sent to Council as an agenda item with Council making the final decision on a project's configuration and on proceeding with project construction.

Another program which receives TAB recommendation and Council approval is the bi-annual, federally funded Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which is managed by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). As the designated regional agency for awarding federal transportation funds, DRCOG awards funding in various project categories such as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Enhancements (bicycle/pedestrian), and Surface Transportation Program (roadway and major capital maintenance). Relative to other communities, the city's TIP request is developed through a rigorous review and recommendation process through the TAB with review and approval from Council. The projects submitted must be supported by TMP policy and are evaluated for how well they

would score against projects competing in the same category. Those projects are then carried through the city's CIP and CEAP processes with Council review as outlined above.

PROPOSED MINOR AMENDMENT PROCESS:

While the 1996 TMP contained the intention of making the plan a living document and established an annual amendment process, it was a printed document and the plan remained largely unchanged until the 2003 update process. As a result, a major effort in the 2003 update was to collect and update information on changes since 1996, including projects that had been built by the city or private developers.

As part of the 2003 TMP process, a complete database of individual projects was developed and made available through the Web-based "Map It!" application. Because this data is maintained in a digital form and not in a published document, it can be easily updated on a regular basis. The availability of the data and its increasing use in a variety of areas highlight the need to keep this information as current as possible. If the proposed minor amendments are made periodically, the five-year plan review process will allow Council to focus on the higher level policy issues of the plan.

The January 2005 discussion with TAB suggested the following principles for the TMP amendment process:

- The Web-based TMP should be as up-to-date as possible. The amendment process needs to be expedient and be reflected very quickly in the Web-based plan;
- The significance of the proposed change should be reflected in the level of review applied to that item;
- The impacts of the change on the investment programs of the plan need to be included and tracked; and
- The project database should be used to comprehensively track changes and maintain a history of all changes.

The proposed amendment process reflects these principles and recognizes that the potential financial impact is a key element in the level of suggested review. This proposal reflects the belief that substantive changes to the Fiscally Constrained element (the Current Funding investment program) will require TAB and City Council review in a public hearing format. At its June 13, 2005 meeting, the main concern of the TAB was to simplify the proposed process and to protect the policy integrity of the TMP. This proposal reflects the changes approved by the TAB at its Sept. 12, 2005 meeting to address these concerns.

Amendment Types

The following amendment types are contained in **Attachment A** and encompass the types of potential changes affecting the TMP. While the recommended process for each type is noted below and contained in the table in the attachment, definitions and discussion of the approach for each item are provided below.

Technical corrections of individual projects (administrative amendment)

These are anticipated to be changes to text or project descriptions that correct errors or reflect improved knowledge on an individual project. Additional planning and engineering work on a particular project, such as improved cost estimates, would be included in this category. The history of changes in a project would be tracked so that the source and reason for any change is clear.

Plan level technical corrections (TAB and Council role)

Project costing in the TMP was generally done on a unit-cost basis for major cost areas such as right-of-way. The costing spreadsheet was structured so that the unit costs can be changed and project costs recalculated on that basis. When there are significant changes in the unit costs as demonstrated by recent construction projects, the project costs of the TMP would be recalculated based on this recent cost experience. The history of this type of change would also be tracked.

Completed projects, development approvals and accepted city plans (administrative amendments)

TMP projects that are completed would be documented in the project data base and be mapped as completed. This category would include projects that are constructed by the city, other public agencies and private development.

The TMP and Transportation Network Plans (TNPs) identify detailed physical transportation connections, some of which are expected to be provided by private development activity. The adopted TNPs allow some flexibility in identifying the location of these facilities with the expectation that the actual location will be determined during the development approval process. Development review negotiations may also result in significant changes to the facilities (such as roadway connections, traffic signals, bike lanes, sidewalk connections and multiuse paths) proposed in the TMP, as has been the case with the Twenty Ninth Street project. The actual improvements and their final locations should be reflected in the TMP at the end of the development review process. These would be reflected in the Fiscally Constrained (Current Funding) and Action Plan investment programs of the TMP as it is unlikely that redevelopment or a change in these facilities will occur during the life of the plan. TAB would annually review these changes and decide how they should be reflected in the Vision program. If TAB recommends changes to the Vision plan through the addition or deletion of facilities, then these proposed changes would go to Council as an agenda item.

As master plans, area plans, Transportation Network Plans (TNPs) and/or CEAPs are developed and adopted, they may produce changes in transportation facilities that should be reflected in the TMP. As the city develops more master plans and increasingly uses the area planning and TNP processes to refine expectations in specific areas of the community, the need to maintain consistency between plans will increase. After these plans are publicly reviewed and accepted by City Council, the TMP will be updated administratively to reflect any changes from these adopted plans.

Several examples of how these minor amendments would be reflected in the “Map It!” application are contained in **Attachment A**.

Change in facility type (TAB and Council role)

Members of the public as well as various city groups and activities often suggest or produce changes in facility type, such as the suggestions to change a proposed multimodal path into on-street bicycle lanes in the bicycle system. This type of change would likely have either a fiscal impact or reduce the level of service anticipated; therefore, a public hearing and recommendation by the TAB with an agenda item to Council is proposed.

Deleting a facility (TAB and Council role)

Due to other changes, a given facility may duplicate an existing or proposed connection or may not longer be a reasonable proposal. In this case, citizens or staff may propose to delete a facility. As facility deletions are potentially significant to a variety of interests, these proposals would have a public hearing and recommendation by the TAB with an agenda item to Council.

Addition of a facility with no fiscal impact (TAB and Council role)

While this may be an unlikely occurrence as most facility additions would most likely have a fiscal impact, formally adding a facility to the plan should have a public hearing and recommendation by the TAB with an agenda item to Council.

Addition of a facility with a fiscal impact (TAB and Council role)

For the reasons cited above regarding the need to change the investment programs of the TMP, additions of new facilities with a cost to the city are a significant change to the plan and should have a public hearing and recommendation by the TAB with an agenda item to Council.

Policy changes (5 year review or Council initiated)

Proposals for policy changes in the TMP would only be considered as part of the five-year plan review or under the direction of City Council. This plan review would include a high level assessment of progress under the Plan, any needed revisions of the policy focus areas and refinements of the TMP policy direction. Policy changes would be analyzed by staff and considered through a broad public process including public hearing before both TAB and the Council.

Approved By:

Frank W. Bruno,
City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Graphical examples of potential minor amendments
- B. Table of Amendment Types and Process
- C. Transportation Project Approval Process

Table of Amendment Types and Process

Amendment Type	Staff role	TAB role	Planning Board role	Council role	Time frame
Individual project corrections	Review and make change administratively	No Role	No Role	No Role	As needed
Plan level technical corrections	Provide an information item with analysis to TAB	Review information item	No Role	Advise with a weekly information packet item	As needed
Completed projects, development approvals and accepted city plans	Review and make changes administratively	Informed of changes annually, determine recommended effect on the Vision investment program	No Role	No Role unless changes are proposed. Then advise with a Council agenda item.	As needed, with TAB review annually
Change in facility type	Analyze and provide a recommendation to TAB	Review and recommendation following a public hearing	No Role	Advise with a Council agenda item	As needed
Deleting a facility	Analyze and provide a recommendation to TAB	Review and recommendation to Council following a public hearing.	No Role	Advise with a Council agenda item	As needed
Addition of a facility without fiscal impacts	Analyze and provide a recommendation to TAB	Review and recommendation to Council following a public hearing	No Role	Advise with a Council agenda item	As needed
Addition of a facility with a fiscal impact	Analyze and provide a recommendation to TAB	Review and recommend to Council following a public hearing	No Role	Advise with a Council agenda item	As needed
Policy change	Consider as part of the five-year plan review; analyze and provide a recommendation to TAB	Review and recommend to Council following a public hearing	Review and recommend to Council following a public hearing	Review and decision following a public hearing	Every five years

Input on Design & Implementation of Capital Improvement Projects

